

10/17/11

CITY OF ELK RIVER SNOW AND ICE CONTROL POLICY

Opening Statement

Snow and ice are natural occurring elements in Elk River and this policy is a guideline as to how the City of Elk River Street Department deals with these natural elements on City streets and sidewalks. The City will provide such control in a safe and cost effective manner, keeping in mind safety, budget, personnel and environmental concerns. The City will use their employees, equipment, and/or private contractors to provide this service.

SNOW PLOWING

Responsibility

The Street Department monitors the street conditions to determine the timing and amount of equipment and personnel necessary to clear the streets.

The Street Superintendent or his designee has the responsibility of determining plow routes and sequencing of operations in accordance with priorities as established by this policy. The Superintendent shall retain the latitude to adjust sequencing or route assignments based on storm conditions, equipment availability, and other conditions warranting changes.

Guidelines for Commencement of Operations

Snow plowing and/or ice control operations will be initiated by the Street Superintendent or his/her designated representative.

<u>Condition</u>	<u>Typical Response</u>
Less than one inch light snow	Respond only to call outs by local police for sand and/or salt application in specific areas.
Less than one inch wet snow	Two trucks with salt and/or sand on priority routes, hills, railroad crossings and residential intersections as needed.
Ice	All trucks with salt and/or sand on priority routes, hills, railroad crossings then residential intersections, and skip sand residential streets.
1" to 1½" Snowfall	All trucks with salt or at temperatures -5 degree F or colder sand and salt, on priority routes, hills, railroad crossings and residential intersections and skip sand residential streets as needed. Plow drive aisles of all parking lots as minimum.

1½” to 4” Snowfall

Streets

Plow all streets curb to curb within 24 hours of the end of the storm.

Parking Lots

Plow all city parking lots concurrently with street plowing. All parking lots to be plowed within 24 hours of the end of the storm.

Cul-de-sacs

Some cul-de-sacs are plowed in conjunction with street plowing but all cul-de-sacs will be plowed curb to curb within 48 hours of the end of the storm.

Downtown Snow Hauling

Completed within 72 hours of the end of the storm.

Street Snow Hauling

Completed within 96 hours of the end of the storm.

4” to 8” Snowfall

Streets

Plow all streets curb to curb within 36 hours of end of the storm.

Parking Lots

Plow all city parking lots concurrently with street plowing. All parking lots to be plowed within 24 hours of the end of the storm.

Cul-de-sacs

Some are plowed in conjunction with street plowing but all cul-de-sacs will be plowed curb to curb within 48 hours of the end of the storm.

Downtown Snow Hauling

Completed within 96 hours of the end of storm

Street Snow Hauling

Completed within 120 hours of the end of the storm.

More than 8” Snowfall

Priority Routes

Plowed when snow accumulation becomes hazardous for driving. Plowed curb to curb within 24 hours of the end of the storm.

Residential Plow Routes

Opened with at least one pass within the first 24 hours of the end of the storm. Plowed curb to curb within 48 hours of the end of the storm.

Parking Lots

Plow all city parking lots concurrently with street plowing. All parking lots to be plowed within 36 hours of the end of the storm.

Cul-de-sacs

Opened with one pass through the center of the circle within the first 24 hours of the end of the storm. All cul-de-sacs plowed curb to curb within 48 hours of the end of the storm.

Downtown Snow Hauling

Completed within 96 hours of the end of storm.

Street Snow Hauling

Completed within 120 hours of the end of storm

Street Plowing Priorities

The City has classified city streets based on the street function, traffic volume, and importance to the welfare of the community. Those streets classified as “Priority Routes” will be plowed first. These are high volume routes, which provide access for emergency fire, police, and medical services, and streets that access schools and commercial businesses. Each plow truck has a priority route.

The second priority streets are residential streets, alleys and city parking lots. The third priority areas are cul-de-sacs.

Work Schedule for Snowplow Operators

Snowplow operators will be expected to work ten-hour shifts. In severe snow emergencies, operators sometimes have to work in excess of ten-hour shifts. However, because of safety concerns, no operators should work more than **fourteen** consecutive hours and no more than eighteen hours in any twenty-four hour period. Operators will take a fifteen-minute break every two hours with a half-hour meal break after four hours. After a twelve-hour day, the operators will be replaced if additional qualified personnel are available.

Extreme Winter Weather Event Policy

In response to an extreme winter weather event involving snow and ice management, the City of Elk River has outlined the following to provide the appropriate response to maintain a safe motoring public and access for emergency responders. The City will respond to such an event in a safe and cost effective manner, maximizing City personnel and resources.

The declaration of the extreme weather event will be made by the City Administrator, with direction from the Police, Fire, Street and Park Maintenance Departments. This will not be a broadcasted event; however it will be to provide additional City staff from different departments to assist in the timely response to the extreme weather event. Any one of the above mentioned individuals can initiate the discussion to prompt the decision to call an extreme winter weather event.

Weather Conditions May Cause Suspension of Operations

Snow and ice control operations will be conducted only when weather conditions do not endanger the safety of city employees and equipment. Factors that may delay snow and ice control operations include; severe cold, significant winds, and limited visibility. Any decision to suspend operations shall be made by the Street Department Superintendent or his designee and shall be based on the conditions of the storm. The City will still provide access for emergency, fire, police, and medical services during a major snow or ice storm.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks on the City's non-motorized pathway system are plowed concurrently with the street plowing using City Park Department equipment. Sidewalks are cleared of snow, but the City cannot remove packed snow and ice build up. City sidewalks will be plowed with one machine and will be prioritized into first day, second day and third day areas. Sidewalks that are not on the City's non-motorized pathway system must be cleared by the property owners.

Ice Control & Sand/Salt Application

The City will use sand, salt, and other chemicals when there are hazardous ice or slippery road conditions. The City is concerned about the effect of such chemicals on the environment and will limit its use for that reason.

First Priority - Priority routes, high volume intersections, and railroad crossings.

Second Priority - Stop intersections, moderate volume intersections.

Third Priority - Residential intersections.

Elk River, like most communities, does not have the equipment or resources to sand all streets end to end, and during extremely cold weather, chemicals are not responsive as ice melters. Drivers must use caution when operating a motor vehicle, especially during winter months.

Roadside Mail Boxes

The City shall not assume liability for mailboxes damaged during snowplowing operations unless the Street Department determines that a plowing unit has made direct contact with the box. Mailboxes that are damaged by contact with City equipment will be repaired by Street Department personnel as soon as possible after plowing operations are completed.

Snow Hauling

In the early morning hours on the day following the residential plowing operation, the snow is loaded and hauled from the downtown area and several locations where there is no snow storage (~~snow hauling areas are highlighted on Map #2~~).

This operation requires the motor grader to windrow the snow, the loader mounted snow blower to load it and four or more trucks to haul it away. Snow hauling will be scheduled by the street superintendent or his designee as soon as practical following the plowing operation. Scheduling may be affected by weather, labor and or equipment availability.

Driveways

One of the most irritating problems for residents is the snow deposited in driveways during plowing operations. The plow blade pushes the snow windrows to the right side of the street and also into driveways. The drivers make every attempt to minimize the amount of snow deposited in driveways, but the amount can still be significant. Based on staff, equipment, and the costs associated, City personnel do not provide driveway cleaning. Possible exceptions are at the discretion of the Supervisor for emergency situations.

Sod Damage

Sod damaged by City plowing equipment will be repaired using one of two procedures the following spring:

1. City Street Department will repair the damage using black dirt and seed.
2. The property owner may elect to do the repair work using commercial sod. The City will reimburse the property owner for the sod purchased, not the labor. Said reimbursement must be approved by the City prior to the property owner doing any corrective work or purchasing any sod.

Lawn Sprinkler Damage

The City will not be responsible for damage to any underground lawn sprinklers that are located on boulevards within the street right-of-way. It shall be the responsibility of the homeowner to protect such systems from damage or to relocate sprinkler heads within the homeowner's property lines.

Special Note

It is unlawful for anyone to deposit snow on a public right-of-way per Minnesota Highway Traffic Regulations 160.27 Subd (5):

Misdemeanors: It shall be unlawful to obstruct any public street or highway or to deposit any snow or ice thereon; and,

169.42 Subd (1):

Littering: No person shall throw, deposit, place, or dump upon any street or highway any snow, ice, etc.

Trash Containers

Since trash is collected five days per week, one or more routes encounter trash containers while plowing. Plow operators will slow down and swerve around trash containers, but often times just the snow windrow will knock the container over.

Routes that are plowed on trash pickup day will have to be re-plowed after other snow operations are completed to avoid frozen mounds of snow in the road.

Residents are encouraged to leave their trash containers behind the curb line on trash pickup day because plow operators will not stop to move containers or set containers upright that have overturned.

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